

March 15th

Update on the impact of Covid-19 on gastroenterology in Barrie:

1) On Saturday, March 14th, RVH canceled all nonurgent endoscopic procedures :

Doctors and senior nurses are involved, along with Dr. Lalor and other gastroenterologists, to determine whether cases are truly urgent or not

The majority of cases for March 16th -27th will be postponed for at least 2 weeks. You will be notified.

Please plan to attend scheduled endoscopy appointments, and office appointments, after March 30th, until you get an update from us (our office or RVH)

2) All patients and visitors will be screened on arrival to the RVH hospital

3) Medical and nursing staff with symptoms or travel history will self-isolate appropriately to keep the hospital environment low-risk

3) The Ontario Medical Association, and the Canadian Medical Association are recommending virtual visits, or telemedicine, with possible, which will involve telephone or video consultation.

The efficient and confidential mechanism for these interactions has not yet been rolled out.

4) General precautions involve the following:

- avoid large gatherings
- avoid physical contact
- wash and sanitize hands frequently
- do not touch your face
- self-isolate for 14 days in the case of suspected infection, or travel outside of Canada in the last 14 days
- for these reasons, there is currently no significant concern about attending an appointment at a specialist's office, however we will be moving to virtual care – ie video or phone interactions, ASAP.
- we will avoid overcrowding of the waiting room, which accommodates a maximum of 8 people normally, but will be re-configured to maintain interpersonal space (social distancing).
- please do not arrive significantly earlier than requested (or late), and be prepared to wait outside the office waiting room
- do not come to the office, and please cancel your appointment (no charges will apply), if you have any of the following:
 - age over 70
 - symptoms of upper respiratory tract infection
 - if you have been in contact with a positive Covid-19 case
 - if you have traveled outside of Canada in the past 14 days